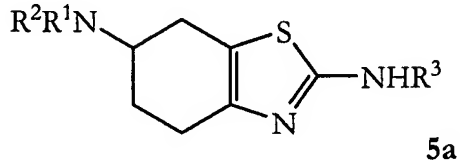
IN THE CLAIMS

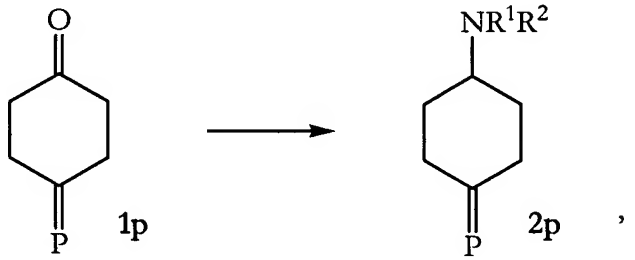
1. (Currently amended) A process for the preparation of a 2-amino-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-6-aminobenzothiazole **5a**:



5a

or an enantiomer or a salt thereof, comprising the steps of:

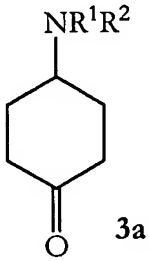
(a) reductively aminating a protected cyclohexandione **1p** with an amine R^1R^2NH to yield a protected 4-amino-cyclohexanone **2p**:



1p **2p** ,

wherein P is a protected ketone functionality, and ~~R^1 and R^2 are any atom or group or, together with the nitrogen to which they are attached, form a ring~~R^1 and R^2 are independently hydrogen or a C_1-C_{12} alkyl, C_2-C_{12} alkenyl, C_2-C_{12} alkynyl, C_4-C_{14} aryl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_1-C_{12})alkyl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_2-C_{12})alkenyl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_2-C_{12})alkynyl, (C_1-C_{12})alkyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl, (C_2-C_{12})alkenyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl or (C_2-C_{12})alkynyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl group, which may be unsubstituted or substituted with one or more of -F, -Cl, -Br, -I, $-CF_3$, $-CCl_3$, $-CBr_3$, $-CI_3$, -OH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -CN, $-NO_2$, -COOH, -R'-O-R", -R'-S-R", -R'-SO-R", -R'-SO_2-R", -R'-SO_2-OR", -R'O-SO_2-R", -R'-SO_2-$N(R")_2$, -R'-NR"-SO_2-R", -R'O-SO_2-OR", -R'O-SO_2-$N(R")_2$, -R'-NR"-SO_2-OR", -R'-NR"-SO_2-$N(R")_2$, -R'-$N(R")_2$, -R'-$N(R")_3^+$, -R'-$P(R")_2$, -R'-$Si(R")_3$, -R'-CO-R", -R'-CO-OR", -R'O-CO-R", -R'-CO-$N(R")_2$, -R'-NR"-CO-R", -R'O-CO-OR", -R'O-CO-$N(R")_2$, -R'-NR"-CO-OR", -R'-NR"-CO-$N(R")_2$, -R'-CS-R", -R'-CS-OR", -R'O-CS-R", -R'-CS-$N(R")_2$, -R'-NR"-CS-R", -R'O-CS-OR", -R'O-CS-$N(R")_2$, -R'-NR"-CS-OR", -R'-NR"-CS-$N(R")_2$ or -R", or together with the nitrogen to which they are attached, R^1 and R^2 form a ring;

(b) deprotecting the protected 4-amino-cyclohexanone **2p** to yield an unprotected 4-amino-cyclohexanone **3a**:



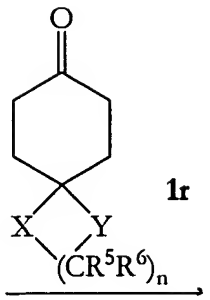
3a

; and

(c) treating the unprotected 4-amino-cyclohexanone **3a** with iodine and a ~~substituted~~ thiourea $H_2N(C=S)NHR^3$, wherein R^3 is ~~any atom or group,~~hydrogen or a C_1-C_{12} alkyl, C_2-C_{12} alkenyl, C_2-C_{12} alkynyl, C_4-C_{14} aryl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_1-C_{12})alkyl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_2-C_{12})alkenyl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_2-C_{12})alkynyl, (C_1-C_{12})alkyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl, (C_2-C_{12})alkenyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl or (C_2-C_{12})alkynyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl group, which may be unsubstituted or substituted with one or more of -F, -Cl, -Br, -I, $-CF_3$, $-CCl_3$, $-CBr_3$, $-CI_3$, -OH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -CN, $-NO_2$, -COOH, -R′-O-R″, -R′-S-R″, -R′-SO-R″, -R′-SO_2-R″, -R′-SO_2-OR″, -R′O-SO_2-R″, -R′-SO_2-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-NR″-SO_2-R″, -R′O-SO_2-OR″, -R′O-SO_2-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-NR″-SO_2-OR″, -R′-NR″-SO_2-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-N(R″)$_3^+$, -R′-P(R″)$_2$, -R′-Si(R″)$_3$, -R′-CO-R″, -R′-CO-OR″, -R′O-CO-R″, -R′-CO-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-NR″-CO-R″, -R′O-CO-OR″, -R′O-CO-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-NR″-CO-OR″, -R′-NR″-CO-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-CS-R″, -R′-CS-OR″, -R′O-CS-R″, -R′-CS-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-NR″-CS-R″, -R′O-CS-OR″, -R′O-CS-N(R″)$_2$, -R′-NR″-CS-OR″, -R′-NR″-CS-N(R″)$_2$ or -R″, to yield the 2-amino-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-6-aminobenzothiazole **5a** or an enantiomer or a salt thereof~~.~~;

wherein -R′- is independently a chemical bond, a C_1-C_{10} alkylene, C_1-C_{10} alkenylene or C_1-C_{10} alkynylene group, and -R″ is independently hydrogen, unsubstituted C_1-C_6 alkyl or unsubstituted C_6-C_{10} aryl.

2. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein [[P]]the protected cyclohexandione **1p** is a cyclic ketal **1r**:



1r

wherein:

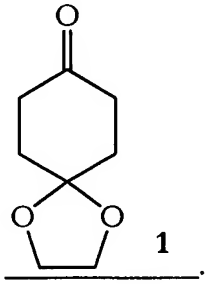
X and Y are independently O, S, NR^7 or Se;

n is 2 or 3;

R^5 and R^6 are independently hydrogen, halide, or an optionally substituted alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl, arylalkyl, arylalkenyl, arylalkynyl, alkylaryl, alkenylaryl or alkynylaryl group, which may include one or more heteroatoms N, O or S in its carbon skeleton; and

R^7 is hydrogen or alkyl.

3. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[2]]1, wherein [[P]]the protected cyclohexandione **1p** is ~~a~~ monoethyleneketal **1**:



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4. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in [[-]]claim 1, wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently hydrogen or an optionally substituted ~~alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl, arylalkyl, arylalkenyl, arylalkynyl, alkylaryl, alkenylaryl or alkynylaryl group,~~ C_1-C_{12} alkyl, C_2-C_{12} alkenyl, C_2-C_{12} alkynyl, C_4-C_{14} aryl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_1-C_{12})alkyl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_2-C_{12})alkenyl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_2-C_{12})alkynyl, (C_1-C_{12})alkyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl, (C_2-C_{12})alkenyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl or (C_2-C_{12})alkynyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl group ~~which may include one or more heteroatoms N, O or S in its carbon skeleton~~.

5. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently hydrogen or an unsubstituted ~~alkyl, aryl~~ C_1-C_{12} alkyl, C_4-C_{14} aryl, or heteroaryl group~~, which does not include any heteroatoms N, O or S in its carbon skeleton~~.

6. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of R^1 and R^2 is hydrogen and the other of R^1 and R^2 is an optionally substituted ~~alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl, arylalkyl, arylalkenyl, arylalkynyl, alkylaryl, alkenylaryl or alkynylaryl group,~~ C_1-C_{12} alkyl, C_2-C_{12} alkenyl, C_2-C_{12} alkynyl, C_4-C_{14} aryl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_1-C_{12})alkyl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_2-C_{12})alkenyl, (C_4-C_{14})aryl(C_2-C_{12})alkynyl, (C_1-C_{12})alkyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl, (C_2-C_{12})alkenyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl or (C_2-C_{12})alkynyl(C_4-C_{14})aryl group ~~which may include one or more heteroatoms N, O or S in its carbon skeleton~~.

7. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 6, wherein one of R^1 and R^2 is hydrogen and the other of R^1 and R^2 is *n*-propyl.

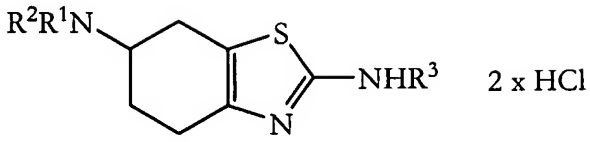
8. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein R^3 is hydrogen.

9. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reductive amination of step (a) is carried out with $NaCNBH_3$.

10-25. (Cancelled)

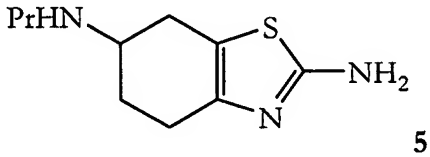
26. (New) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the 2-amino-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-6-aminobenzothiazole **5a** comprises at least 95% of the (R)- or the (S)-enantiomer.

27. (New) A process as claimed in claim 1, for the preparation of a 2-amino-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-6-aminobenzothiazole di-hydrochloric acid salt:



or an enantiomer thereof.

28. (New) A process for the preparation of 2-amino-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-6-(propylamino)-benzothiazole **5**:



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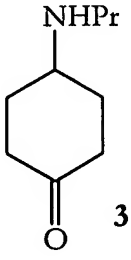
or an enantiomer or a salt thereof, comprising the steps of:

(a) reductively aminating cyclohexandione monoethyleneketal **1** with $PrNH_2$ to yield 4-*n*-propylamino-cyclohexanone-ethyleneketal **2**:

1 **2** ;

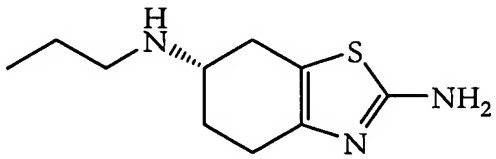
(b) deprotecting 4-*n*-propylamino-cyclohexanone-ethyleneketal **2** to yield 4-*n*-propylamino-cyclohexanone **3**:



3 ; and

(c) treating 4-*n*-propylamino-cyclohexanone **3** with iodine and thiourea.

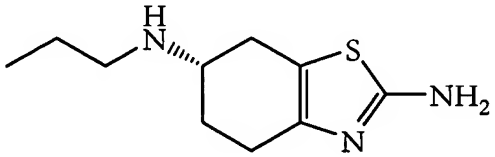
29. (New) A process as claimed in claim 28, for the preparation of (S)-2-amino-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-6-(propylamino)-benzothiazole **I**:



I

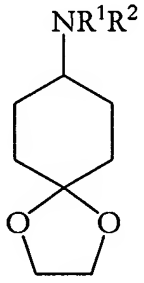
or a salt thereof.

30. (New) A process as claimed in claim 28, for the preparation of (S)-2-amino-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-6-(propylamino)-benzothiazole di-hydrochloric acid salt:



2 x HCl

31. (New) A 4-amino-cyclohexanone-ethyleneketal **2a**:



2a,

wherein one of R^1 and R^2 is hydrogen and the other of R^1 and R^2 is a C_1-C_6 alkyl group.

32. (New) A compound as claimed in claim 31, wherein one of R^1 and R^2 is hydrogen and the other of R^1 and R^2 is *n*-propyl.